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THE MYSTERIE OF THE True Ministry UNVAILED,

As it was to be before, under, and shall be after

Antichrists Time,

AND

The unlawfulnes of the Call of the now

MINISTRY.

By a Witness of the Gospel, JOHN BRAYNE.

JERREM. 51. 9.

We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed; forsake her, and let us go every one into his own Country, &c.

Vers. 10. *The Lord hath brought forth our Righteousnes; come, let us declare in Zion the Work of the Lord.*

Printed at *London*, and are to be sold in Popes-head Alley. 1649.

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To the Supream Authority of the Nation, the Commons assembled in PARLIAMENT.

RIGHT HONORABLE,

I Am bold in Jesus Christ to present you with this insuing Treatise, as a part of the Councel of God, witnessing in the Lord unto you, That the Work you have to do for the House of God, is far above your and the worlds present apprehensions; the true Church being no way to be restored, until you (whose work I hope it is) have made desolate the false Church, Rev. 17. 16. *who before made desolate the true Church,* Rev. 11 2. *so that in all you do less then the making of it desolate, you come short of fulfilling the Mind of God, and occasion the delay of your own*

deliverance, and the Kingdoms Peace, to do which God will inforce you, and not give you rest until it be done, (yea, and all) be it what, or whomsoever: they that hinder it will be removed out of the way, God will spare no man, any thing herein; be ye therefore instructed, ye that be Judges of the Earth, and kiss the Son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little, that ye may in this his day of wrath find favour with the Lord, *that ye may live in his sight, and behold his salvation ready to be revealed; which is the desire and fervent prayer of*

Your Servant

25 *May*, 1649. in the Gospel

John Brayn.

THE

THE MYSTERY OF THE True Miniſtry UNVAILED, &c.

THe bleſſed and only wiſe God, to the magnifying of his moſt glorious Name, hath in the prophetical Hiſtory of the beloved Diſciple *John* ſet forth the Churches ſeveral changes, from that time the Apocalips was written to the end of the world.

1. He ſpeaks to the Churches in the time of their Viſibility, in which time he lived, as in *Chap.* 1. 2, & 3. in which time the Miniſtry thereof are Angel Miniſters, or true Church-Miniſtry, *Chap.* 1. 20. who are admoniſhed by the Spirit of Prophecy of Gods depriving the Churches of the uſe of them for their Apoſtacy, *Rev.* 2. 5. & 3. 16. intimated in taking away the Candleſtick of the Epheſian Church.

Now on this followeth the ſealing up of the Book as a Judgment to the wicked world, ſo that the Scriptures are in a manner taken from the world with the Church-Miniſtry, *Rev.* 5. 2.

2. The next eſtate followeth hereupon, is, the Churches driving into the Wilderneſs, or hid eſtate, Antichriſt having demoliſhed the frame, Conſtitution, publike Miniſtry, and Ordinances, as they were ſet up in the Primitive Church by the Apoſtles, and ſet up

other of his own, called the abomination of desolation set up in the holy place.

1. This is set out *Chap.*12. from *vers.*1. to *vers.*5. where the Church is in its Visibility: *Verse 6.* sets out its Invisibility in its flight into the Wilderness.

2. This flight into the Wilderness is discovered more significantly to us, *Chap.*11. *verse* 2. where the Gentiles are said to tread underfoot the holy City 42 moneths; here by the holy City cannot be meant the City of *Jerusalem*, it is more then 1600 year since that was destroyed, and lieth so; but the Church is here intended, who must be trod underfoot by the Heathens (for so the Nations are, though they are baptized, and call themselves Christians under the present Administrations) during which time of 1260 years, God ordained his Elect, being without Church-Constitution to be ministred unto man otherway then formerly, which way of Administration was either common, or more especial.

1. The common way of teaching was by the Ministry of those which the Scripture calleth the two Witnesses, *Chap.*12.6. who are to feed the Church during its Wilderness Estate. Now the manner how they feed the Church is set down, *Chap.* 11.3. and then because that the Ordination of Antichrist was unlawful, God is said to give them to prophecy, that is, δυναμιν & ἐξουσιαν power to teach against the terror and threats of Antichrist, and authority to do it in Christs Name during that time for the edification of the Elect.

2. To these God in a more especial manner within this time of 1260 day prophetically years, raiseth up seven eminent men in several ages, who serve to restore the Church of Christ by degrees, and destroy the Church of Antichrist: These are spoken of, *Rev.* 8.2. which seven Angels are as the Prophets raised up to the Jewish Church, and added to their ordinary Ministry, by whom God revealed something more of himself then the former world knew: so these opened the seven Seals of the sealed Book, each one bringing something of the hid Gospel to light until all were revealed, and so each one pouring out his Vial on the false Church until it were destroyed, *Rev.*10.7,8. & 16.17,19.

Now these in an eminent manner, God having eminent matters to do by them, are said to have their trumps from God, that is,

their

their Ministry and Call thereunto: and it is very remarkable, that both Witnesses and Angels are said to have their authority from God. Antichrist would give none to these to Minister by, or rather indeed could not, it being an abomination to take it from her, nor did they need it, God giving it them, nor would God use Antichrists authority herein.

1. These Witnesses were not two particular men, as some dream, but a few Witnesses raised up of God successively to instruct the Elect, and to manifest Antichrists delusions in the several ages of the predicted time, under part whereof we live, some of them being one while in *France*, as in *Waldoe*; others in *Bohemia*, as in *Thabor*; others in *England* at other time, as in *John Wicklief*.

2. Nor were they the Magistrate and Minister, as some conceive, from the Types they are drawn from, as *Moses* and *Aaron*, *Zerubbabel* and *Joshuah*.

1. These were to feed the Church, and so may ye say doth the Christian Magistrate, but more these feeds it by prophecy, which is not ordinarily proper to the Magistrate to do.

2. They were in sackcloth still under persecution all these times for the truth, as the Waldenses by Papists, Nonconformists by Bishops, Independents by Presbyters. Now the Magistrates of these times were not brought to sackcloth.

3. To witness to Christ is usually applyed to Ministers, but not Magistrates. The Scripture mentions two sorts of Witnesses, the one ordinary, the other extraordinary; That that qualified the extraordinary, was, that he was *testis oculatus*, 1 *John* 1.1. they telling men what they saw of Christ in word and deed while he was with them in the flesh, 1 *Pet.* 5.1.

The ordinary Witness is either a sufferer for Christ, or a beleever in Christ, discovering to others the knowledg of Salvation by Jesus Christ, which God by his Spirit hath manifested unto him.

Object. Some of the Witnesses were ordained by the Popish Ministry.

Resp. 1. That was before they were called by God to witness, else they would not have received ordination from them.

2. They witnessed not by that Ordination.

That which constituted the ministring Witness here spoken of

is

is set down *Rev.*19.10. *I am of your brethren of thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the witness of Jesus, for the witness of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy:* So that where God did, for this time of the Churches desolation, give the Spirit of Prophecy, there was witness sufficiently qualified thus; about 1160 *Valdus* of *Lyons*, a rich man on the sudden death of one in company with him brought him to read the Scriptures, and teach it his family, and after many of the poor, in so much that he became a famous light in that dark time of the world, and did more good then a thousand ordained Ministers have done since without any Ordination. And one *John Claydon* about the year 1415. had this as an Article by the Bishops exhibited against him, (taken out of a book that was called *The Lanthorn of Light*,) That he held the Bishops License, for a man to preach the Word of God is the Character of the Beast. *Vide Fox*, *Acts* and *Mon.*

Now, that this sufficiently did constitute the witness for this Ministry during this time, I commend this to your consideration:

1. That they were to minister no more then God by his Spirit gave them an inward power to do, which was to prophecy.

2. The Scripture mentions not that they had authority given them to administer the Sacraments as the Apostles had, *Mat.* 28. *ver. ult.* and therefore they had none, nor durst not administer them.

3. Nor during their Ministry were they to be administred, they being not to constitute any Church, nor was their visible Church to be constituted by them.

4. Nor are the Sacraments to be administred but in a true constituted Church, which are never mentioned in all the History of the Church, but after *Babels* fall, *Rev.*18. 2. and the Call of the Saints out of her, *Vers.* 4. and the Marriage of the Lamb, which was the Restauration of the Church to her primitive Constitution, *Rev.*19.7. then *Verse* 9. followeth, *Blessed are they which are called to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb:* so that before the Marriage or Church-Constitution is, to be no Supper by any allowance of Jesus Christ at all.

5. There being no true constituted visible Church, there was not that power left in any rightly to elect or ordain any to the publike places of the Gospel-Ministry, nor will be while the Wit-

nesses

nesses time is, until God send him whom he will send to restore it.

5. I grant that if a right constituted Church were in being, that then none may presume to teach by his gifts, without the Church call, when that that is lawfull is to be had: but until that time come, Gods giving to prophecy is sufficient authority without any present call, it being Antichristian.

Applic. Consider I pray, to what height of abomination the Sacraments have been put unto, it being worshiped as God cast into *Tibur* to stop the raging of the Seas; said to be really the body and blood of Christ by transubstantiation, and then the error of consubstantiation came up, and was made to bring death, which was given for to minister life to the Saints, the Cup kept from the Lay-people as they call them, and how since under Episcopacy and Presbitery, communicated to unbelievers carnal and evill minded men, yea, prophane and wicked, to the offence of godly minded men.

2. How hath the Sacrament of Baptism been administred Nationally with Doctrines that corrupted the mindes of men, as if in it their sins were washed away, and that by this, they come to be members of Christ and of his Church: which state is no other nor no better then the condemned World.

3. Hence God, foreseeing to what abomination in this time the Sacraments by Antichrist would be put unto, did in the time of this Churches hiding, as he did with the *Iewes* in the time of their being in the wilderness, dispence with his Ordinance, they being not circumcised: we also during this time being not baptized, are accepted Baptisme, being that visible Ordinance did onely accompany the estate of the visible Church; which is yet hid, and mainly served to its constitution.

4. The Ministry of the Witnesses and their Authority, is only to endure while the Church is unconstituted, and differs from the Church constituted Ministry in time, in call, in Ministry and office, they being but VVitnesses onely, and not Gospel-ministers, as Church-ministers.

5. God calling them [my Two VVitnesses] sheweth that he did approve of them and their Ministry during that time, and that there were no other Ministers in all the world, but these God

did allow of or own at all amongst the Nationall Ministry, which were multitudes.

6. As one of these I now Minister.

7. If the Witnesses had not authority to administer the Sacraments, then no other Ministry during their time of ministry, have, or had in all the world.

8. As they had not authority to baptize, so consequentially they had no authority to constitute a Church, nor have any yet received it, as I think, as it shall be given.

The Third Change, from its Desolate estate, to its Restoration again.

WHich shall be done by him, spoken of *Rev.* 18. *Ver.* 1. who comes on the fall of *Babel* Rev. 17. 6. and calls men out, *Cap.* 18. 4. celebrates the Marriage of the Lamb, *Rev.* 17. 19. administers the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, *Ver.* 9. by whom the Church is adorned with Ministry and Ordinances as a Bride prepared for her Husband, *Rev.* 21. 2. For all these, there is not mention made of any other Church-ministring Angel but *this* aforesaid.

That this Truth may appear more clearly true, I shall commend to your consideration these succeeding Conclusions drawn from *Mat.* 21. 15. *The Baptism of Iohn, whence was it, from Heaven, or of men?*

Christs teaching *ver.* 23. occasioned the Priests and Elders of the People to question him (saying,) *by what authority dost thou these things, & who gave thee this authority?* (which proves)

1. That Teachers ought not to teach without authority.

2. This Authority should be lawfull, *Rom.* 10. 15.

3. Men may lawfully inquire into Teachers authority, (yea, and ought to do it) that they may see ground to obey that that is lawfull, and reject that that is unlawfull.

4. The Priests had good ground to move the question to *Iesus Christ*,

1. *Christ* being of the Tribe of *Iudah* and not *Levi*, by the Ceremonial Law could not teach publickly, *Heb.* 7. 14. Nor had *Moses* said any thing of any Priest should rise out of that Tribe.

2. They had the overseeing of the Ministry during their time committed to them.

3. If

3. If they had not authority to teach; the People were not to hear, but to avoid them.

Now Christ answers their Question, not by an answer, but by proposing another question to them to answer; which question, concerns not himself, but the *Baptist*: nor doth it concern teaching, but baptizing; in which the authority of the Baptist, for his baptizing, is implyed, though not expressed by a Dilemma.

1. In the words (*from Heaven*) that is, whether it were immediately from God, and so be extraordinary.

2. In the words (*or of men*) that is, whether it were by an ordinary call from men, according to Church Constitution or not?

1. Which proves that all publick ministerial Acts, whether preaching or baptizing, ought not to be executed without authority from God mediate or immediate.

2. All Authority delegated of God to man, is comprehended under one of these.

The *Baptists* authority was from God extraordinary.

1. He did that the Legal Priests did not, hence was he called the *Baptist*, as being the first ever did that ministeriall Act; hence now, was he himself baptized as *Mat.* 3. 14. *I have need to be baptized of thee.* 2. Mat. 11. 13. *The Law* (that is, the legal Ministery) *and the Prophets were until John:* Now in that they ceased in *John*, it proves he was none of them, nor did they acknowledge him.

Now that *Johns* Authority was from Heaven, though he did no Miracle, *Joh:* 10. 41. ἐκεῖνος ἐποίησεν οὐδὲν is clear, a way by which, God again will restore the true Church-Ministry into the world.

1. It was prayed from Heaven without a signe by the Prophets predictions *Mal.* 4. 5. and confirmed by Christ, *Mat.* 11. 14. *This is Elias which was for to come, if ye will receive him.*

2. Esa. 40. 3. Mat. 3. 3. *This is he was spoken of by the Prophet Esaiah*: These very predictions were Miracles themselves, and so he needed none for confirmation.

Conclusion is, That God, because hath foretold in the Scripture that he will send one to restore the fain Church and the Church Ministry, He will not do it by miracles, but leave men to the Word to be directed to receive him that is to do it, when he that shall do it is sent therefore.

That we may receive him when he comes consider:

1. He is that *Elias* which is to come: There are two persons spoken of by Christ under that name, *Mat.* 17. 11, *Elias shall first come*, which is that that is to come, so much looked for of the Jews, and neglected of us: And then *vers.* 12. *Elias is already come, &c.* which was *John* the *Baptist*. Now how, and by what he is to be known, is by *Malachi* set down *cap.* 4. 5. said here by Christ, *to restore all things*: O how welcom should he be to us!

2. *Rev.* 18. 1. His glory is said to lighten the earth, so that he cannot be hid.

3. He comes after the desolation of Antichrist so soon, that it is his work to publish the fall of Babel: I may more abundantly describe him, but this sufficeth.

2. Conclusion: In that God in this Angel sends authority from Heaven:

1. It proves there is no ordinary Authority in the world left either that is lawful or sufficient.

2. There being now no new Administration or Priesthood to be at all, it sheweth the present is unclean, and not to be made use of; as was done in the Legal Ministry, which was put an end unto, changed, or swallowed up in the Evangelical.

The ordinary authority in Scripture is called by the name of *Moses* Chair, which is that succession the Priests proved their Ministry from *Moses* by, *Mat.* 23. 3. to which Christ alludes in the illative *(therefore,) Therefore whatever they bid you observe*; that is, because they sit in *Moses* Chair, inferring, that if they had not sit in *Moses* Chair, there were no tye on the people to hear them, nor no authority in that Ministry to teach them.

1 *Conclusion*: That as the Priests were to prove their Call to the then Ministry from *Moses*, which had the extraordinary Call; so are we to prove our ordinary Call to the Ministry to be derived successively to us from the Apostles, who had the immediate or extraordinary Call from Christ.

2 *Conclusion* is, That the succession must be true, and in a true constituted Church, which Rome claims, though falsly, in *Peters* Chair, which indeed once was *Pauls*, but never *Peters*, Vid. *Zanch. cap.* 19. 4 *Precep.*

Now our succession being no lawful nor true Ministers, these Queries:

1. Whe-

1. Whether any ministerial act done by that Ministry be Evangelically authoritative?

2. Ἐν τίνι ἐξουσίᾳ in what Authority shewеth not all Authority is sufficient to minister by some, may be false and counterfeit, as Antichrists is, or none is.

3. On the demand in the text, *Who gave you this authority*, must be answered.

1. Either that it is from *Rome*:

2. Or by succession of a Gospel Church-Ministry set up in this Kingdom.

Reason. I know that Text, *Heb.* 6. 4. will not allow any man to take this honor (in the Church) to himself, unless he be called of God as *Aaron* was.

For the clearing of which Scripture, observe these things:

1. That in the Church ordinarily none can minister without authority from the Church; for here he speaks to a Church, and of Church-administrations.

2. It is bounded by an exception, unless (extraordinarily) he be called of God.

3. This Call he reduceth to *Aaron*, and not the Apostles, though *Aaron* were a minister of the Law, which not without a mystery prophetically sheweth any thing.

1. That some unlawfully would take this honor to themselves.

2. That God hath ordained under the Gospel to call some as *Aaron* was by *Moses*, that is, God will have the Magistrate set up that Ministry he hath appointed to restore the Church by.

Applic. 1. Such a thing must be revealed in the Word to be, or the Magistrate cannot do it, *Moses* not doing but by command, as in this and elsewhere.

2. If such a thing be not to be accomplished, how vain were this exception if made of such a thing as is not to be under the Gospel at all.

That Ordination from *Rome* is not to be proved Evangelical.

1. Antichrist is said to *sit in the Temple of God as God*, 2 *Thes.* 2. 4. and how as God, but in his authoritative giving Commission to the Ministry of his false Church, setting up Laws and appointing the Administrations in his false Church to be according to his and not the Will of Jesus Christ.

2. If succession from *Rome* be truly Evangelical, how can the Church be said to be hid, yea that bloody harlot made her to be hid to the world.

3. God in his Word hath declared Antichrist to be the fallen star, *Rev.*9,11. Therefore we cannot prove our Ministry thence, unless we will prove one abomination by another; yea, he is the murtherer, not the Minister of the Saints; and shall we prove our Ministry from this *Jezabel*.

2. Succession cannot be proved true from any other Church.

1. If in all the world the Church were but hid three years and a half, Succession could not be proved, how then if it be hid 1260 years? for how can it be said to be hid, when Succession of Ministry can be proved for time, place, and persons?

2. Against those that endeavor to prove their Call from a succession of Ministry set up in this Kingdom in *Lucius* time, I have proved at large in my Treatise called *The Resurrection of fallen Churches*, that there was never any true constituted Church in this Kingdom, and then no true Ministry or Succession to be proved hence at all.

And were it granted a true Gospel Church was set up in the Land in *Lucius* time, or before, and that ever since there have been faithful Teachers in the Land?

1. For many years they have been but of the two Witnesses, whose Ordination of those that were ordained, was as corrupt as the Popish Priests, nor did they minister in a Church-way.

2. Nor was Ordination exercised by them, but the Popish Hierarchy, who solely exercised the Authority of Church-administrations in publick.

3. Nor were their Societies formally and publickly distinguished from the Popish Societies until *Luthers* time.

4. Had they the power of Ordination, it must be according to that power ordained them, which was Antichristian.

Object. We had Ordination from *Luther* one of the seven Angels, who had his trump from God, and was prophecyed of before, and so had authority to restore the Ministry.

1. We

3. We of this Kingdom cannot plead this.

2. Could we: Yet *Luther* not changing the Church to its right Constitution, nor erecting the Gospel Ministry, what ever his Call was, the ordinary succession of such as succeeded him could not be Evangelical.

3. Nor was the Restauration of the Churches fallen estate given to him to do, it being not to be until the flesh of Antichrist be eat, and her Antichristian policy burned, 1 *Cor.* 3.15. and she made desolate, that is, her Ministry took from her, *Rev.* 17.16. Now *Luther* came, as it were, at the beginning, or in a visible manner seemed to begin these things, the fulfilling whereof is reserved for him who, as another *Luther*, shall lighten the world, but with a clearer and more exceeding glory, and none else but he to whom it is given may do it at all.

Quest. If a peoples electing a Minister be not authority sufficient to qualifie him for all ministerial duties?

Resp. 1. Election is the Peoples Interest,

2. Ordination is properly the true Church Presbyteries Interest.

3. These two are distinct things, and proper to several persons, one of which is not to destroy the other, nor can one sufficiently qualifie a man without the other.

4. Though God hath given the Church, as a Church, the power of Election, yet a company of men in what other state soever, have not this power belonging to, or residing in them; for if they had, how is then God said to give it to the Church.

5. Now as none have power to elect out of Church-society, so Elders ordinarily have no power to ordain any that are not thus elected by a people of and in a Church constituted Estate.

Applic. To Ministers, I beseech you, in all humility for Gods Glory, and your own Peace in the day of Accompt, see if the Ordinances of God may be administred without a Call; if so, what need a Call, or *Paul's* so oft pleading for it? and whether an Antichristian Call be not worse, then none, when we rule in Gods House by the authority of his Adversary? how intolerable a thing were this to be admitted in our own houses.

Illustration. As *Nehem.* 7. 67. the Priests and Levites sought their Register amongst those, that were recounted by Genealogy, but

but it was not found, therefore were they, as polluted, put from the Priest-hood, which if all Churches that cannot prove their true and lawful successions were so dealt withall, where would there be a Church or Church-Minister?

And it is observable, that the Lord having set apart a particular Tribe for the Ministry of the Levitical Priesthood, succession served to continue them, their Corruptions not destroying their ministry: It is otherwaies now under the Gospel.

2. If the Administrations in the corrupt Church of *Corinth* were but *hay, wood or stuble* 1 *Cor.* 3. 12. what are ours, now administred, but their like, being as far below those administred in the true Church, in a right way, as stuble is to precious Stones and Pearls.

Object. We had Ordination neither from Pope nor Bishops but from Presbitery.

Resp. Presbitery is a stream from that Fountain which in no wise cannot be purer then the rest of that Hierarchy.

Appl. to the People. Attend to what the Spirit saith unto you. 1 *Thess.* 5. 12. *that those ye are to obey ought to be over you in the Lord, Acts* 20. 28. and *the holy Spirit is to make them Overseers*: So that where these are not, the bonds of Government and Authority in teaching are destroyed, there being no Power or Authority to be acknowledged in the Church, but what is of Jesus Christ: *Jer.* 23. 21. and 29. 9. God doth condemn the false Prophets for going and he did not send them: And in that 23. *Jer.* 21. God puts sending before speaking, as distinct things; in which they began to err.

Appl. To Magistrates: Consider the time you are in, even at the period of Antichrists allotted time; and it will shew you clearly what God is doing, and what you are to doe: if you goe against Gods will and work, you will be broken to pieces as others have been before you: you will no longer prosper then ye walk in his way; and know, Gods device is against *Babel*, *Jer.* 51. 11. 29. which he will bring about to be done, though against your wills, yea against your selves: The Lord in mercy be a light unto you, and through your darkness guide you and preserve you, to see the hoped for *salvation* of God in the Land, *Ruth* 4. 11. and the Lord make you

do

doe worthily in *Ephrata* and famous in *Bethlehem*.

Now in that Christ saith, *Mat.* 13. 52. *Every Scribe instructed to the Kingdom of Heaven bringeth forth of his Treasury new things and old*: I Commend to you, for Confirmation of the aforesaid particulars, the 54. *Cap.* of the Proph. *Esa.* In which these severall estates of the Gentile Church are clearly held out, with its estate before it was a Church.

1. Its estate before it was a Church, is set out in *Ver.* 1. by *not bearing and not travailing with child*, called *desolate*, which estate can no way be applyed to the Jewish Church.

2. This farther cleared, in that this estate of the Gentiles is opposed to the Jewes, they being the *married Wife*, signifying their Church estate as opposed to the Gentiles desolate Condition.

The 2. Estate of the Gentiels after calling, is their *married Estate* under the Gospel in the Apostles time.

1. From *ver.* 1. where the multitude of Children shee then should have, are even more then the married Wife.

2. On this God promiseth the Church great increase to betide her under that estate, *ver.* 2. where *her Seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and shall make the desolate Cities be inhabited*; Desolation being the estate God cals the world by, when without Communion with the Lord Jesus in the fellowship of the Gospel: Hence Antichrist for destroying the Gospel-Church Constitution, is called the *abomination that maketh desolate*, shee having made the world desolate as it was before Christ.

Ver. 4. The holy Spirit tels her of her youth, which time followed shortly on her Conversion, when she apostatized and fell from her first Love, adulterating the wayes of God, and in the end fell to *Idolatry*, by which the marriage Bond came to be broken.

Object. The time of her *youth* was before Conversion, a time which precedes *Marriage*.

Resp. The Time before Conversion was a desolate Time, and she desolate in that time, which is not accounted of with God at all: and *ver.* 6, plainly proves this time of youth, was

time of marriage, for she is there plainly called *a wife of youth.*

The 3. estate is an estate of *widowhood*, ver. 4.

1. Which proves her once to have been the wife of Christ before, or how could she be said to be now a Widow?

2. This *Widowhood* is expresly set down how it came to be brought upon her, and that is, she was a *forsaken woman*, her Husband had left her; And now desiring to be again admitted to be the Lords Spouse, she is rejected and refused, as not meet, as in *ver.* 6.

3. This estate, is that estate that we have been in since the fall of the Gospel-Church.

4. *Ver.* 7. Proves it, where the Lord is brought in, saying, *for a little moment have I forsaken thee*: 1260 years in Eternity are lost, as a moment is in the worlds thousands of years; or as drop of water is lost that fals into the great Seas.

The fourth Estate is her second Restauration, in which Christ takes the Gentile Church again to himself, which is that we look for, and is now immediately to come.

1. As in *Verse* 5. in which Christ again puts the Church upon the looking on him as her Husband.

2. *Verse* 6. holds out the means how he assumes her to himself again, and that is giving her Call, *Rev.* 18.4.

3. Her condition at this time of Calling is excellently set forth, she is then grieved in spirit for lack of her Husband, and for her former dishonoring of him; yea, she is in a forsaken Estate, having a multitude of enemies, and no friends, *Rev.* 16.14. and so knoweth not what to do for lack of Christ.

4. The way God hath to bring her to be his Wife after Calling, is set out by the word קבץ by gathering Members into a Church-Society, which work God is said to do רחמים גדלים the words are both in the plural, as that the greatness of all mercies is included in the Lords taking of the Church to himself again, and proves the Church shall yet have abundance of sweet experience of Jesus Christs Love unto her above all other days or times past.

5. Observe the order things are set down in by God, as first Calling, upon which followeth gathering, and the mercies mentioned, *Hosea* 2.19,20,21,22. are thereupon made good.

6. *Vers.*

6. *Verſ.* 9. God gives the promiſe *Gen.* 9. 11. to the Church for aſſurance, his wrath ſhould no more reſt on her, to which water God alludes, *Rev.* 21. 1. ſaying, *There ſhall be no more Sea*; which proves *Iſaiah* to mind the ſame things, time, and people with *John*.

7. This Scripture agreeth with *Johns* in many things, to be fulfilled now among the Gentiles, as the departure of the hils, and the removing of the mountains, ſpoken of *Rev.* 6. 14. & 16. 14. in which worldly greatneſs, that our impediments to this great work are ſo removed as never was to be in any age as now, *v.* 10.

8. In this *Verſ.* 10. after theſe are removed, and not before, the means by which the Goſpel Call may be effectual to us, is ſet down, and that is by binding Chriſt to us, and us to Chriſt by a Covenant, which is the marriage knot.

9. *Verſ.* 11. ſets out the eſtate of the Gentiles with all exactneſs, before this Marriage time, they are afflicted, toſſed with tempeſt, and not comforted, as our eſtate at this day doth abundantly witneſs, when God begins to comfort her in her Church eſtate to be, he being now about to build the Goſpel Temple according to that of *John*, *Rev.* 11. 1. In which conſider.

1. He ſpeaks of laying the very foundations which he would not do (if any foundations,) that is, if any true Church were now in being, *Verſ.* 11.

2. God ſaith he will make her Windows (that is, her Miniſters) of *Agates*, which God by an extraordinary way comes to make again, as in *Verſ.* 12.

3. He will make her gates of *Carbuncles*, which ſhews that God would again now come to reſtore the way of Church-admiſſion to its Membership, which Antichriſt, like another *Sampſon*, had carryed away, as he the gates of *Gaza*.

Applic. That none of the ſtones mentioned, but the *Saphir* ſtones, which are the foundation ſtones, which ſignifie the Apoſtles are not of thoſe in *Rev.* 21. or in *Aarons* breſt, which ſhew this was the Gentile Church, and not the Jews in this place.

2. In that he ſaith, *he would lay the foundations, make gates and windows*, he ſheweth the deſolation of the Church to be otherways then is now thought on.

Verſ. 13. he ſaith, *All her children ſhall be taught of God*: In

my Treatise of the Resurrection of fallen Churches see my Exposition of *Heb.* 8. 10, 11. which accords with the Gospel estate only.

Vers. 13, 14. He comforts her in the peace she should enjoy after her Churches Constitution, and bone before in that Magistrates were wise, and would be warned of God herein.

Vers. 14. In Righteousness she shall be established, to which 2 *Pet.* 3. 13. alludes in his new heaven, and new earth.

Vers. 15. 16, 17. God tells her what would come on her before these things were fulfilled, as that the enemies would gather together, *Rev.* 16. 14. not by God, but the frogs, who should fall for her sake, *Rev.* 13. 9, & 12. 8, 9. and then with what they should come against her, with the Smiths instruments of War, and with false accusations from their deceitful tongue, calling the Saints Schismaticks, Hereticks, Deceivers, &c.

It remains I should prove this against the common received Expositions, but think it needless, only this generally men understand here by the Jewish Church only, not the Gentiles, which the word *Married wife*, set down in the beginning by way of oppositien to the desolate Church, is sufficient conviction of it self to prove the contrary, and that the Scripture as before applyed concerns us, our peace and way to true happiness, if the Lord give us grace to embrace it, which only can secure us from the desolation and misery so eagerly pursues us, which the Lord in this sweet and saving way of mercy deliver us from, for his Glory, and his Names sake. *Amen.*

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FINIS.